

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAR 25, 2020

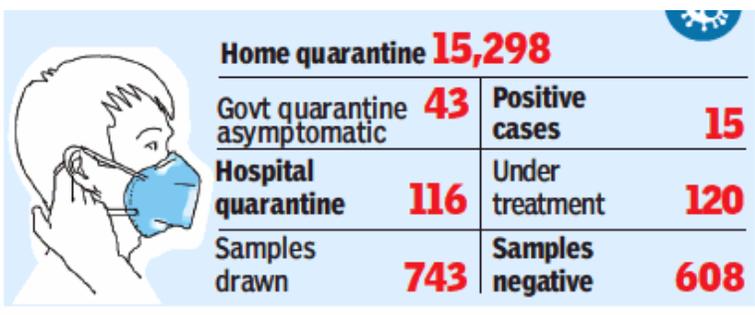
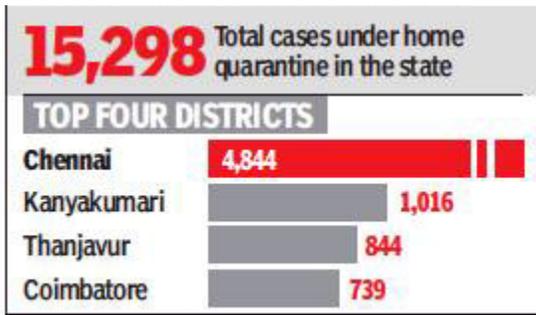
TAMIL NADU

- Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami - announced a ₹3,280 crore relief package to fight the Covid-19 outbreak in the state.
- The relief package is intended to assist the livelihood of the public, especially daily wage labourers, taxi drivers, construction and unorganised sector workforce, hawkers and elders

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ One-month additional salary for doctors, nurses, local body officials and conservancy workers 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> dhal and one kg edible oil for construction workers and auto drivers enrolled in welfare boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ₹1,000 each for all ration cardholders 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amma canteens to continue to offer food. Collectors and city corporation commissioner directed to set up community kitchens to prepare food for the needy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Free rice, dhal, edible oil and sugar for PDS cardholders for April month 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Additional aid of ₹1,000 for unregistered pavement vendors 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Senior citizens dependent on anganwadi centres to get food at their doorsteps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ₹1,000 and 15kg rice, one kg 		

- ✓ The government has announced a cash assistance of ₹1,000 per family holding a ration card.
- ✓ All family cardholders can avail of rice, dhal, edible oil and sugar for the month of April free of cost, as announced by the Government
- ✓ Similarly, those who are not able to collect the commodities in March could get them in April, along with the entitlement for that month.
- ✓ Unregistered pavement vendors will get additional cash support of ₹1,000, apart from the ₹1,000 per ration card to be distributed through the PDS system.
- ✓ MGNREGS workers will get special pay for two days

- ✓ Families of construction workers and auto drivers who have enrolled in welfare boards would get a special cash support of ₹1,000 and 15kg rice, one kg dhal and one kg edible oil
- ✓ The Chief Minister announced an additional one month salary for doctors, nurses, local body officials, sanitary workers and others involved in efforts to fight Covid-19.
- ✓ On March 23, Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami launched an app to help health department doctors hold video conference with quarantined patients
- **The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister - announced the creation of a new district of Mayiladuthurai on March 24**
 - ✓ Nagapattinam will be divided into two and Mayiladuthurai will be created as the 38th district of TN
 - ✓ The formation of the new district is aimed at efficient administration and to speed up the implementation of government schemes.
 - ✓ The other districts that were created in recent months are Chengalpattu, Ranipet, Tirupattur, Tenkasi and Kallakurichi.
- **Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami - announced the creation of an Information Centre Park on March 24**
 - ✓ The park will be spread over 150 acres across Nemili and Mannur villages in Sriperumbudur taluk and will be developed at a cost of ₹500 crore
 - ✓ The park will be set up by Tidco and aims to generate 3,500 jobs
 - ✓ Making a suo motu statement in the Assembly, the Chief Minister also announced that a Startup and Innovation City would come up in Chennai at a cost of ₹350 crore.
 - ✓ The announcement of the new City was to encourage innovation and help knowledge-based firms by offering the necessary infrastructure and a commercial atmosphere
- **Six more people - were tested positive for Covid-19 in Chennai on March 24, thereby taking the total number in Tamil Nadu to 18**
 - ✓ This is the highest number of cases reported in a single day so far.
 - ✓ Health minister C Vijayabaskar ruled out any chances of community transmission
 - ✓ He observed that all 18 infected cases had either travelled abroad or had contact with people who had travelled abroad.
 - ✓ The six who tested positive on March 24 included a 65-year-old man who returned from New Zealand and was admitted to a private hospital in the city
 - ✓ A 25-year-old man, who returned from London, was tested positive and was admitted to Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital.
 - ✓ A 55-year-old woman, a resident of Saidapet, is undergoing treatment currently at KMC after testing positive for the virus.



- ✓ Earlier in the day, the minister announced that a 74-year-old man and a 52-year-old woman, US returnees, were admitted to Stanley Medical College and Hospital
- ✓ Another 25-year-old patient, who returned from Switzerland, admitted to Kilpauk Medical College Hospital had also tested positive.
- ✓ As per the Government estimates, more than 500 people have been put on mandatory home quarantine in the past two days because they stayed, travelled or met with a person who had tested positive for Covid-19
- ✓ The number of people in home quarantine across the state has gone up to 15,298.
- ✓ Chennai topped the list with 4,844 people, followed by Kanyakumari (1,016), Thanjavur (844) and Coimbatore (739).
- ✓ The state government has set up 10,000 beds in the government hospitals and at least 1,000 in the private sector
- ✓ The Government will compensate the hospitals under the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance scheme for the expenses incurred on testing poor patients.
- ✓ The test, which is free in government labs, can cost ₹4500 in private hospitals.
- ✓ Three private labs, CMC in Vellore, Apollo Hospitals and Neuberg Ehrlich Laboratory in Chennai, have been permitted to test patients.
- ✓ The city corporation has tied up with the Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) to operate at least 100 special buses to help conservancy/sanitation workers with their commute.
- ✓ The CM also announced that the government will pay sanitary staff an additional one month's salary.
- ✓ There are more than 17,100 sanitary workers in Chennai alone.
- **Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami - allotted ₹110 crore for turning the selected hospitals into isolation centres on March 24**
- ✓ The fund will be utilised to convert the Government Hospital of Thoracic Medicine, Tambaram; the Government Tuberculosis Hospital, Thoppur, in Madurai; the Government Medical College Hospital, Coimbatore; and the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Sanatorium in Thanjavur into isolation centres.
- ✓ The amount will also be used for upgrading the King Institute of Preventive Medicine and Research into a Bio-Safety Level III entity.

- ✓ The CM also announced that a robotic surgical centre would be set up at the Tamil Nadu Government Multi Super Speciality Hospital at Omandurar Government Estate at a cost of ₹34.60 crore
- **The state government - has proposed to construct a 'Marina Commercial City' in nearly 11 lakh square feet opposite to the Foreshore Estate.**
- ✓ It has also initiated steps for setting up a finance city, Tamil Nadu Trade Centre, at Nandanam on Anna Salai in an area of 25.16 acres
- ✓ The TNHB had planned a twin towers structure with 27 floors, modelled on the Petronas Towers in Malaysia's capital of Kuala Lumpur, on Anna Salai for the financial hub.
- ✓ This was announced by Deputy chief minister O Panneerselvam, who holds the housing and urban development portfolio, in the assembly
- ✓ The scenic Marina promenade is expected to have a mall, food courts and entertainment centre
- **In an unprecedented move, the Tamil Nadu assembly - gave its approval to the demands of grants for 27 departments without any discussion on March 24**
- ✓ Earlier in 2004, the then AIADMK government under J Jayalalithaa had cleared demands for 24 departments in a single day.
- ✓ The House, which was convened on March 9, was adjourned sine die by the speaker on March 24
- **The state judiciary and police department - have decided to decongest the prisons as a precautionary measure to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus among the inmates.**
- ✓ The judiciary had issued orders to release more than 1,180 prisoners from 9 Central prisons for men, 5 special prisons for women, district and subjails in the state, since March 21
- ✓ It has brought down the number of inmates to 12,886 as against the total sanctioned (accommodation) strength of 23,392.
- ✓ At present 55% of the total accommodation of inmates are in the prisons in the state

STATES

- **The total number of Covid-19 cases reported from the states - has increased to 557, as on March 24.**
- ✓ However, the rise of new infections dropped a bit to 59 on March 24, from 99 the previous day.

KERALA OVERTAKES MAHARASHTRA				
Name of State / UT	Cases Today	Total Cases	Recovered	Deaths
Kerala	14	109	4	
Maharashtra	10	107	8	3
Karnataka	9	42	3	1
Telangana	6	39	1	
Uttar Pradesh	4	37	11	
Gujarat	6	36		1
Rajasthan	0	32	3	
Delhi	0	30	6	2
Haryana	2	28	11	
Rest of India	13	102	1	4
Total	64	562	48	11

- ✓ As many as 48 coronavirus patients have been discharged from hospital after treatment, which was a sharp rise from 35 reported on March 23.
 - ✓ Kerala recorded the highest number of fresh cases on March 24 with 14 cases.
 - ✓ It surpassed Maharashtra as the state with the highest number of cases at 109.
 - ✓ Advocating social distancing vehemently, Telangana CM K Chandrashekar Rao announced that his government will not hesitate to issue shoot-at-sight orders if people don't stay indoors during lockdown
 - ✓ In a related development, the district administration in Varanasi announced legal action under Section 188 of IPC would be taken against those who spread rumours that coronavirus can be spread through newspapers and disrupt their distribution
 - ✓ Section 188 of IPC advocates one-month jail or ₹200-fine or both for disobeying a public servant who is empowered to promulgate an order.
 - ✓ Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal announced that his government would give ₹5,000 to each construction worker in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak
 - ✓ He had also constituted a five-member doctors' panel to prepare a plan to deal with situation if the national capital enters stage 3 of Covid-19.
 - ✓ The Railways has also announced to release the full salaries of at least 50,000 contractual and outsourced employees even as all passenger services are suspended till March 31.
- **The Delhi state government- has decided to implement the Ayushman Bharat Yojana in the national capital amidst the COVID-19 outbreak.**
- ✓ The decision was announced by Deputy Delhi Chief Minister Manish Sisodia in the state assembly.
 - ✓ The Ayushman Bharat Yojana will provide free annual health cover up to Rs 5 lakh per family for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization
 - ✓ The scheme is also known as the 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana' (PMJAY) or the National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM).

- ✓ It is expected to cover around 10.74 crore poor and the economically weak families and about 50 crore Indian citizens.
- ✓ The benefit cover will include both pre and post-hospitalisation expenses.
- ✓ The Ayushman Bharat Yojana was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 23, 2018.

NATIONAL

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi – announced a complete lockdown of the country for 21 days starting midnight of March 25 in order to break the chain of Covid-19 transmission and save India from a massive outbreak**
- ✓ The Prime Minister addressed the nation at 8 pm on March 24, 2020 on combating coronavirus outbreak in India.
- ✓ The 21-day lockdown, extending till April 14, 2020, is arguably the first measure taken by any country to deal with the virus threat
- ✓ This was the second address of the Prime Minister in the last five days on the ways and means to tackle Coronavirus
- ✓ In his earlier address to the nation on March 19, PM Modi asked the citizens to self-isolate themselves and participate in the 'Janata Curfew' on March 22, 2020, which was strictly followed by the citizens

'CORONA MEANS KOI ROAD PAR NA NIKLE'

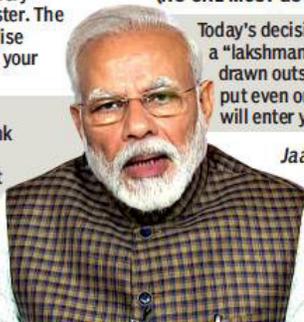
“ From midnight, the entire country will go under complete lockdown for 21 days. This lockdown is in a way a curfew and will be more stringent than the Janata curfew

Forget what it means to go out for 21 days. Stay at home. It is for all Indians, every family and even for the Prime Minister. The laxity of certain people will jeopardise the entire country – including you, your parents, friends

CORONA MEANS 'KOI ROAD PAR NA NIKLE' (NO ONE MUST GO OUT ON THE ROADS)

Today's decision of lockdown means a "lakshman rekha" has been drawn outside your doors. If you put even one foot out, coronavirus will enter your homes

Pray for the people putting their lives at risk in the line of duty...Think of nurses, doctors, paramedics, pathologists working day and night ... those who are sanitising your surroundings... media people working 24 hours to give you correct information... the police officials doing their duty to protect you



Jaan hai to jahan hai (If there is life, there is the world)...We must strengthen our resolve at every step and also be restrained

ALL EFFORTS MADE TO ENSURE SUPPLY OF ESSENTIAL GOODS



Top priority to be accorded to measures that ensure people's lives are safe



Centre has allocated ₹15,000cr for coronavirus battle



Isolation wards & beds, ventilators and other arrangements to be made with this amount

- ✓ The PM pointed out that even the healthcare systems of developed countries like the US and Italy were struggling to respond to the unprecedented situation resulting from the rapid global spread of Covid-19
- ✓ However, he suggested that India could still find a way out of the crisis by exercising social distancing

- ✓ The PM suggested implementation would be rigorous by mentioning that the doorstep of homes should be treated as 'lakshman rekha' by the people
- ✓ The unprecedented step of placing the nation under lockdown comes days after more than 500 districts were put under such restrictions.
- ✓ There is a list of exempt services such as healthcare workers, media, sanitation staff and police
- ✓ During the address, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a healthcare package worth Rs 15,000 crore to fight COVID-19 in the country

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All Indian govt & PSU offices to remain closed, except defence, police, treasury, public utilities, disaster mgmt, post offices, NIC, early warning agencies ➤ State/UT govt offices to remain closed, except police, home guards, civil defence, fire & emergency services, disaster management, prisons, district admin & treasury, electricity, water, sanitation and essential municipal services ➤ OPEN: Hospitals, dispensaries, chemist & medical equipment shops, nursing homes. Transportation for all medical & paramedic personnel and other hospital support services will be permitted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Commercial and pvt establishments to be closed down, with the following exceptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Food & grocery shops, dairy & milk booths. District authorities may encourage and facilitate home delivery B. Banks, insurance offices, and ATMs C. Print & electronic media D. Telecom, internet services, broadcasting & cable services E. Delivery of all essential goods including food, pharma, medical equipment through e-commerce F. Petrol pumps, LPG, petroleum & gas retail and storage outlets G. Power generation, transmission and distribution units and services H. Capital and debt market services as notified by Sebi I. Cold storage and warehousing services J. Private security services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Industrial establishments to remain closed, except Manufacturing units of essential commodities; production units, which require continuous process, after obtaining permission from state govt ➤ All transport services – air, rail, roadways – to remain suspended, except transportation for essential goods and fire, law & order and emergency services ➤ Hospitality services to remain suspended except <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Hotels, homestays, lodges and motels, which are accommodating tourists and persons stranded due to lockdown, medical and emergency staff, air & sea crew B. Establishments being used for quarantine facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All educational, training, research, coaching institutions to remain closed ➤ All places of worship to be closed for public. No religious congregations permitted ➤ All social/ political/sports/ entertainment/ academic/ cultural/ religious functions/ gatherings barred ➤ In case of funerals, congregation of not more than 20 persons will be permitted
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- ✓ The package will be utilized to acquire protective gear and medical equipment, increase testing facilities, training of medical and paramedical staff, PPEs, ICUs, isolation beds and ventilators.
- ✓ In order to contain the virus, the government had earlier invoked the Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- ✓ The COVID-19 was listed as “notified Disaster” by the Government
- ✓ Also, the Epidemics Diseases Act, 1897 was invoked.
- ✓ The World Health Organization (WHO) had earlier declared COVID-19 as a global pandemic on March 11
- **Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman - relaxed compliance norms for companies required to file under Income tax, GST, customs and corporate laws during the video conference meeting on March 24**
- ✓ The FM announced that debit card holders will henceforth be able to withdraw cash from any bank ATM for free for the next three months.
- ✓ Also, the FM waived the minimum balance requirement fee in the banks.
- ✓ During the occasion, the Finance Minister revealed that the government is currently working on an economic package, which will be announced soon.
- ✓ The digital trade transaction charges will also be lowered in both private and public sector banks

- ✓ Besides, small companies will be protected from insolvency action by raising the threshold under the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code to a loan of ₹1 crore, instead of the current ₹1 lakh floor.
- ✓ The minister also announced that IBC provisions may be waived in case the coronavirus crisis persisted till beyond April.
- ✓ The GST filing deadline for three months, starting February, has been deferred until June 30.
- ✓ Besides, companies with an annual turnover of up to Rs 5 crore do not have to pay any late fee or interest.
- ✓ In case of the larger entities, the penal interest has been halved to 9%.

COVID-19 IMPACT EASING COMPLIANCE BURDEN

INCOME TAX

- Last date for I-T returns for FY 18-19 extended to June 30
- Aadhaar-PAN linking date extended to June 30

RETAIL BANKING

- No fee to be charged on ATM withdrawals from any other bank ATM for 3 months
- Waiver of min balance fee
- Digital transaction charge cut for trade finance consumers

GST & INDIRECT TAX

- For cos with Rs 5cr turnover, returns can be filed by June-end. No penalty, interest and late fee
- For other firms, reduced rate of interest of 9% (current rate 18%), no late fee & penalty
- GST annual returns for FY18-19 extended to June 30
- Payment date under Sabka Vishwas extended to June 30
- 24X7 customs clearance

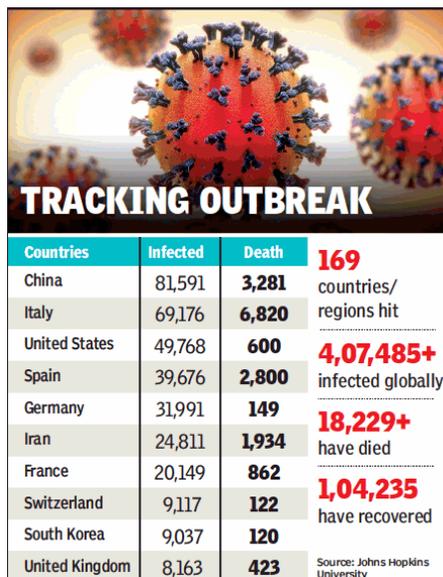


- ✓ On the income tax front, the last date for filing returns for the financial year 2018-19 has been extended from March 31, 2020 to June 30, 2020, which is also the new deadline for linking Aadhaar with PAN.
- ✓ Instead of the March 31 deadline for those looking to settle their direct tax disputes via the Vivad Se Vishwas scheme, no additional 10% amount will be levied if the payment is made by the end of June 30
- ✓ On the indirect tax side, the payment deadline under the Sabka Vishwas scheme has been extended until the end of June and no interest will be levied till the date.
- ✓ The Compliances under Wealth Tax act, Income Tax Act, Black Money Act and Benami Transaction Act have also been extended up to June 30, 2020
- **The Election Commission - decided to postpone the Rajya Sabha Elections, which were scheduled to be conducted on March 26.**
- ✓ On February 25, the ECI had announced the biennial elections to 55 Rajya Sabha seats spread over 17 States
- ✓ These seats are due to be vacated in April following the retirement of MPs
- ✓ Though the elections have been postponed now, 37 candidates have already been elected without any contest.
- ✓ The Election Commission will now announce a fresh schedule for the remaining 18 seats after reviewing the circumstances.

- ✓ If the elections are not held soon, the strength of the house will be reduced, as the term of the 18 MPs in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya and Rajasthan will end on April 2, 2020
- ✓ It has to be recalled that former Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi took his oath recently as a member of Rajya Sabha recently after receiving nomination from the President
- **In a major development in tackling novel coronavirus, Pune-based MyLab - has become the first indigenous manufacturer to be approved for deploying its kits for COVID-19 testing**
 - ✓ The MyLAB kit's testing time is 2 ½ hours, whereas the testing time of COVID-19 in current lab testing services is 4 hours.
 - ✓ The laboratory has planned to sell the kits at Rs 1,200 to Rs 1,500 per test.
 - ✓ The testing methodology adopted by MyLab has been validated by National Institute of Virology, Pune
 - ✓ The kits are based on Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain reaction
 - ✓ A single kit can study 1000 samples.
 - ✓ Currently, the diagnostic tests for COVID-19 are largely reliant on foreign companies
 - ✓ As per the written guidelines by the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR), only diagnostic kits that have been approved by the United States Food and Drugs Administration (USFDA) or certified by the European Union (EU) be allowed to offer commercial tests for detecting SARS-CoV-2.

INTERNATIONAL

- **The World Health Organisation - announced that the U.S. could become the global epicentre of the COVID-19 pandemic, as on March 24**



- ✓ As on March 24, around 3,77,000 infections have been reported across 194 countries and territories with more than 16,500 of them fatal.
- ✓ Over the previous 24 hours, 85% of new cases were in Europe and the U.S., and of those, 40% were in the U.S.
- ✓ As of March 24, the virus had infected more than 42,000 people in US, killing at least 559.

PERSONALITIES

- **Former Chief Minister and National Conference (NC) vice-president, Omar Abdullah - was released on March 24 from a Srinagar sub-jail after 232 days**



- ✓ Abdullah was detained on August 5 last ahead of the Centre's decision to revoke J&K's special status
- ✓ He was later booked under the Public Safety Act (PSA) and kept in the Hari Niwas sub-jail in Sri Nagar

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **The first fatal case of Hantavirus - was reported in China's Yunnan Province on March 23, 2020**
- ✓ A man tested positive for the virus passed away shortly afterwards in Yunnan province in China.
- ✓ The symptoms of Hantavirus are similar to Covid-19 infection symptoms.
- ✓ The infected individual died on a chartered bus following which the other passengers of the bus were also tested and found to be 'positive' for the virus.
- ✓ However, Hantavirus is rarely known to have spread from person to person and is not airborne
- ✓ Hantavirus or Orthohantavirus belongs to a family of viruses, which mainly spreads through rodents or rats.
- ✓ It can cause various diseases including hantavirus pulmonary syndrome (HPS) and hemorrhagic fever with renal syndrome (HFRS)

- ✓ The hantavirus symptoms are similar to coronavirus as it is indicated by fever, fatigue, muscle aches, headaches, dizziness, abdominal pains and chills.
- ✓ It can also lead to cough, respiratory issues with shortness of breath and can prove to be fatal.
- ✓ The virus infection has a mortality rate of 38% as per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- ✓ Hantavirus has no known treatment or vaccines.
- ✓ The only way to prevent Hantavirus is to prevent the presence of rodents in homes and minimise contact with them.

SPORTS

- **Japan's prime minister and the head of the International Olympic Committee - agreed to postpone the Tokyo 2020 Games to 2021 in an extraordinary move**
- ✓ The IOC was urged to postpone the Games, scheduled to start on July 24 and end on August 9, following the global lockdown after the Covid-19 pandemic
- ✓ On March 22, the IOC had initially given itself a deadline of four weeks to announce its proposal to postpone the Games
- ✓ Recently, Canada and Australia withdrew their teams and the powerful US Olympic Committee and World Athletics also called for a postponement
- ✓ The move would be a devastating blow for the city of Tokyo, which had won widespread praise for its execution with venues finished well ahead of time
- ✓ Tokyo has spent around \$12.6 billion to host the Games, according to its latest budget, and the postponement could cost it around \$6 billion in the short-term
- ✓ It is not the first time Tokyo has seen unscheduled changes to the Games
- ✓ Earlier, Japan was due to be the first Asian country to host the Olympics in 1940 before pulling out due to international pressure over its war with China
- ✓ The Olympics, which has experienced boycotts, terrorist attacks and protests, but has been held every four years since 1948, would be the highest profile event affected by the virus
- ✓ It happened only thrice in the history of the Olympics when its actual schedule have had changed.
- ✓ Earlier, it was cancelled due to the World Wars
- ✓ The 1916 Olympics were cancelled due to the First World War while the Olympic Games of 1940 and 1944 were cancelled due to World War II
- ✓ The 1980 Moscow Olympics were boycotted by Western countries led by the US, while the 1984 Los Angeles Games were boycotted by the Soviet Union and its allies.

